

# MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

## NEWSLETTER

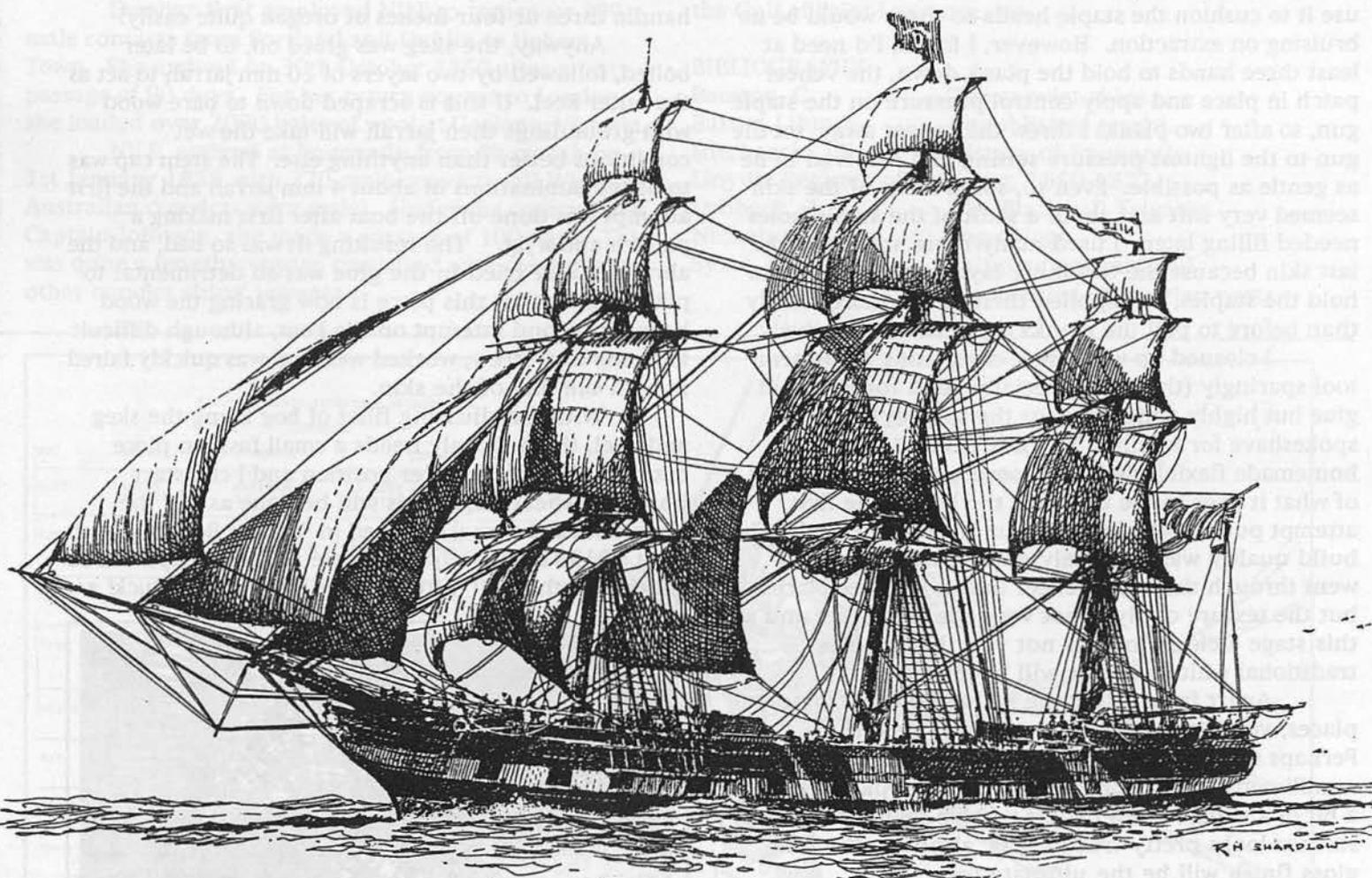
## DECEMBER 1992

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Maritime Heritage Association inc

PO Box 1100  
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Editor and typesetting: Mike Lefroy.



NILE 763 TONS - A fine example of a Sunderland built frigate. by R.H. Shardlow (Story page 3)

# BUILDING A TRADITIONAL RIVER LAUNCH

(part three)

by Mike Beilby

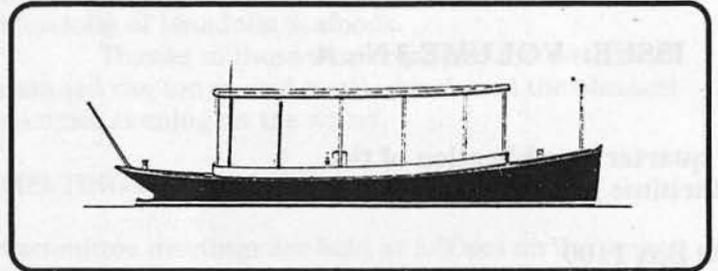
Well, the Classic and Wooden Boat Festival came and went and readers will be amused to learn that I did not get the boat even portable enough to tow it down for display, an ambition I'd nursed for some time. The reason? Marg and I became involved in some Local Government shenanigans which took up, and continue to take up, a lot of time. Consequently, boat work has been reduced to about one day and one evening a week.

However, although slow, some progress has been made. The third and final skin was completed in reasonable time, considering that I was trying for a good final finish. All my scarfed half-pieces had gone into the second skin so there was no more joining of scraps, but I was trying to match up the grain of adjacent planks in case I was brave enough to want to clear finish the hull (after all they did it on surf boats and racing skiffs, didn't they?) To this end I got a pile of scrap veneer (American oak, actually) and set out to use it to cushion the staple heads so there would be no bruising on extraction. However, I found I'd need at least three hands to hold the plank down, the veneer patch in place and apply control pressure on the staple gun, so after two planks I threw the veneer away, set the gun to the lightest pressure setting and resolved to be as gentle as possible. Even so, some areas of the skin seemed very soft and about a sixth of the staple holes needed filling later. I used many more staples in the last skin because the two inner layers were enough to hold the staples, so I applied them much more closely than before to pull the planks down more effectively.

I cleaned up with great care, using a Surform tool sparingly (this was especially good for lumps of glue but highly dangerous for the soft ply) then a spokeshave for levelling plank edges and then a homemade flexible "torture board", so called because of what it does to the user, not the boat. The first attempt put my left shoulder out for about a week! The build quality was definitely getting better - I only went through the outer veneer in two or three places but the texture of ply is not very prepossessing and at this stage a clear finish is not very likely. The traditional white topsides will have to do.

Apart from filling the staple holes in some places, very little filler was used on the surface. Perhaps seven or eight hollows were filled by up to half a millimetre of filler, usually where two planks met in a bit of a valley. Most people who've seen it think the surface looks pretty true as it is, although the final gloss finish will be the ultimate test.

I next laminated up the skeg from 2" oregon, some that came with the keel and not marvellous quality, either. The various pieces had to taper in funny ways and it was difficult cutting them all out of the available 6" plank. The result is that the skeg does need a bit of filler. After gluing up and making a ply



pattern of the curve needed to fit the keel, I opted to have this cut at my friendly neighbourhood cabinet maker, who had a much larger bandsaw than I, and this was a bit of a mistake. Big is not always beautiful, especially when the blade is a fine toothed one for cutting particle board. It had a great deal of trouble with the hard layers in the oregon and the resulting wobbles took hours of spoke shaving to iron out. I later realised that my little 14" Taiwanese special could handle three or four inches of oregon quite easily!

Anyway, the skeg was glued on, to be later bolted, followed by two layers of 20 mm jarrah to act as the outer keel. If this is scraped down to bare wood with groundings then jarrah will take the wet conditions better than anything else. The stem cap was to be ten laminations of about 4 mm jarrah and the first attempt was done off the boat after first making a pattern and a jig. The resulting fit was so bad, and the abrasive filler tried in the glue was so detrimental to plane blades that this piece is now gracing the wood heap. A second attempt on the boat, although difficult to clamp and screw, worked well and was quickly faired in with the line of the skin.

With a radiussing fillet of bog along the skeg and keel, the hull only needs a small fashion piece between skeg and rudder position and I can start fibreglass sheathing. This will be done as per the Victorian canoe yawl featured in "Classic Boat" through most of 1991. Finally gunwhale rubbing strips will be added and the hull lifted off the jig. Wish me luck! ••



Using the "torture board"

# THE NILE CONVICT SHIP

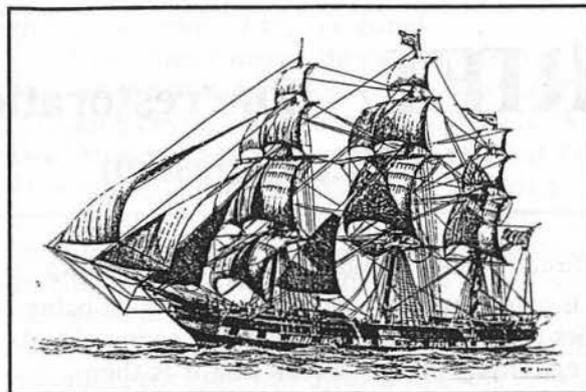
by Ross Shardlow

The NILE was a fine example of the beautiful Sunderland built frigates which were characteristic of the Western Australian convict ships. Of the 33 transports that came to Fremantle between 1850 and 1868, 17 were built at Sunderland. They were larger, faster and better built (usually to A1 classification), than the convict transports that went to NSW and Tasmania.

The NILE was built in 1849 for the eminent ship owner Duncan Dunbar. She was a full rigged ship of 763 tons and 133.6' x 32.8' x 21' DOH. She is not to be confused with the 1126 ton Blackwall frigate of the same name built in the following year for the rival firm of R. & H. Green. Ten of Dunbar's ships were chartered as convict transports, six of which were built at Sunderland.

Dunbar first employed NILE to transport 299 male convicts from Portland and Dublin to Hobart Town. She arrived on 30th October 1850 after a fast passage of 90 days. For her return voyage to London she loaded over 2000 bales of wool at Geelong, Victoria.

NILE arrived at Fremantle from Plymouth on 1st January 1858 with 270 male convicts (all Western Australian convicts were male). Under the command of Captain Johnson, she made a passage of 100 days. This was quite a lengthy voyage compared with some of the other convict ships' voyages.



The MERCHANTMAN came out in 73 days, RACEHORSE in 76 days and, in 1866, the CORONA took the record with 67 days.

NILE'S manifest included a crew of 34, 71 steerage passengers and 12 cabin passengers, including the Anglican Bishop of Perth, Bishop Hale. The 71 steerage passengers were the warders and pensioner guards and their families. They were given free passage as emigrants to the colony.

On February 3rd, 1858 NILE departed Fremantle bound for Colombo carrying the first export shipment of grapes from Western Australia.

In 1876 NILE'S lofty rig was cut down to a barque. Three years later, in 1879, she foundered in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. ••

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### S.T.S. LEEUWIN ADVENTURE VOYAGES

#### SCHEDULE

NO.	DEPART	ARRIVE	REMARKS
3/93	ALBANY 26/1/93 TUE	ESPERANCE 5/2/93 FRI	10 DAYS UNIVERSITY HOLIDAYS VISITING HOPETOUN
4/93	ESPERANCE 9/2/93 TUE	ESPERANCE 19/2/93 FRI	10 DAYS VISITING RECHERCHE ARCHIPELAGO DUKE OF ORLEANS BAY
5/93	ESPERANCE 22/2/93 MON	ALBANY 4/3/93 THU	10 DAYS VISITING BREMER BAY (FULLY BOOKED)
7/93	ALBANY 23/3/93 TUE	FREMANTLE 2/4/93 FRI	10 DAYS SCHOOL VOYAGE (MINIMUM AGE 15) VISITING BUNBURY
W1/93	FREMANTLE 9/4/93 FRI	FREMANTLE 11/4/93 SUN	WEEKENDER
9/93	FREMANTLE 13/4/93 TUE	FREMANTLE 23/4/93 FRI	10 DAYS SCHOOL HOLIDAYS VISITING BUSSELTON
10/93	FREMANTLE 4/5/93 TUE	CARNARVON 14/5/93 FRI	10 DAYS VISITING MAUDS LANDING DIRK HARTOG ISLAND

For information on all voyages contact

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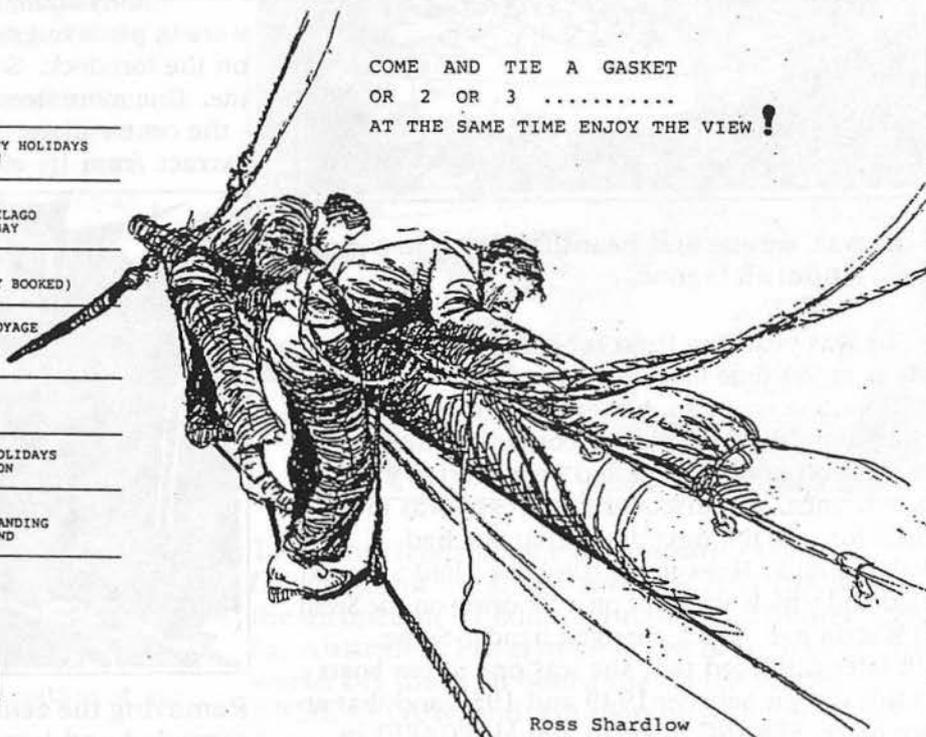
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Ross Shardlow

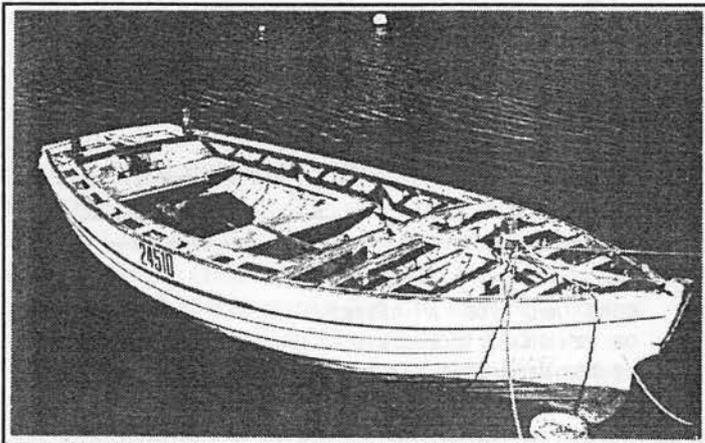
# **ORIEL** - The restoration saga of a born again gaffer

by Mike Igglesden (part one)

"The traditional nailed clinker dinghy is a real trap for dirt. It is also extremely difficult to remove paint when it comes to refinishing. With age the conventional nailed clinker dinghy starts to leak and it is then nearly impossible to rejuvenate it." Michael Verney - author of numerous books on boatbuilding and boat repairs.

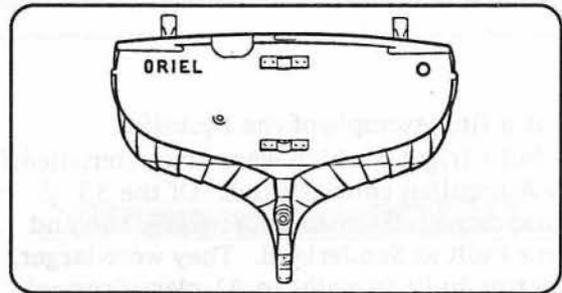
This quotation from one of Verney's books gave me inspiration during the restoration of ORIEL. It appealed to my somewhat perverse sense of humour as it could easily have been written specifically for her. I printed it in large lettering above the workbench after I had realised the enormity of the task I had undertaken!

The boat in question is a clinker built gunter sloop 18' x 6'6" x 3'9" with the plate down. Built in Singapore by Thornycrofts at their Tanjory Rhu Yard in 1950 to their "Auxiliary Knockabout" design, ORIEL is of all teak construction. The hull cost \$3000 Malay. A half decker with a steel centre plate, Stuart Turner P55 motor, she carries approximately 160 square feet of sail. But the restoration story starts back in September 1988.



There she was, serene and beautiful, lying in a small pen in a Mandurah lagoon.

She was yearning for a rebirth, longing for someone to spend time love and money on her before it was too late. She was also, I later discovered, concealing a multitude of sins. I contacted the owner through a friend of mine who had been alerted to ORIEL's existence, and discovered that she was to be advertised for sale the next day! That she had remarkably similar lines to a little boat I had admired and sailed and which was kept on a mooring on the Swan was not lost on me. ORIEL changed hands. Some research later disclosed that she was one of ten boats built to this design between 1949 and 1951 and that at least two more, SENANG in Perth and MARGARET in Mandurah are still alive and very well.

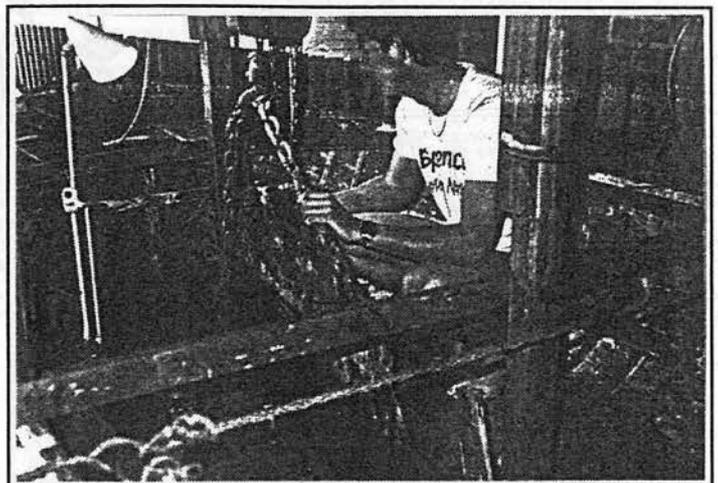


We brought her up to Perth on a borrowed trailer and I was relieved to find (although I had measured up the door widths and the boat's beam a million times) that the garage/workshop door was just wide enough to accommodate entry. We transferred ORIEL onto a substantial pre-built table and set her up in her new temporary home. The temporary aspect transpired to be something of a misnomer. Three years is a long time when six months was the original time estimated for the restoration!

November 1988.

To work. The Stuart was lifted out, the thwart, benches, floor bearers, engine beds and everything possibly removable which was not an integral part of her construction were removed and put to one side or consigned to the scrap box. A transducer with associated fairings had been attached (very firmly) to the outside of the hull and seemed loathed to be parted from the boat. She possibly had been used for fishing during her later years.

She had no deck to remove - the deck beams were in place but needed refastening and crowns raised on the foredeck. So the bare shell sat there looking at me. One more item to sort out prior to the big clean-up - the centre plate. This proved to be rather difficult to extract from its case. (continued page 5)



Removing the centreplate which was badly corroded and jammed in the case.

It had been installed as a quarter inch galvanised steel plate but the case inside had been beautifully lined with a copper envelope. Voila! The galvanic action had corroded and expanded the plate to such an extent that the removal entailed cutting the case sides down to hog level and the pulling this now oversized plate out with a handy billy. Even then, we started lifting the boat to the workshop roof not the plate, since it was jammed so hard into the remaining part of its case. The centreplate slot had previously been filled with concrete, which, of course, had to be chipped out. Twenty hours work later the remains of the offending centreplate and its case lay on the workshop floor in many small pieces.

Now the serious clearing up procedure could commence. Mr Verney - as the afore quotation testifies - knew a thing or two. The inside of an 18' clinker boat has many nooks and crannies into, under and around which oil and grease, fish remains, mud, shells, old layers of paint and 40 years of assorted gunk can collect. Much was removed with the scraper, some with a hacksaw blade (where the ribs bridge the planking between the lands) and the very thick paint (five different colours) had to be attacked with (horror) a heat gun.

Another 100 hours of my life gone!

A constant concern throughout the restoration project was the damage which would eventuate through the planking drying out in our summer heat. A garden 'soak-it' hose was wired around the inside of the hull and hessian cloth draped over all the planking. The tap turned on low for a few minutes each day during summer proved to be effective as, upon launching three years later, she leaked very little and some small cracks in the planking which were not bad enough to deserve drastic measures became no worse. A handful of swimming pool salt was thrown in every now and again in the hope that it would act as a deterrent to dry rot setting in, in the damp humid conditions which eventuated from the soggy hessian lying in the boat. ••

#### EDITOR'S COMMENT:

This is the first in a series of articles by Mike on the restoration of ORIEL.

The completed vessel caught the eye of the judges at this year's Classic and Wooden Boat Festival and won the award for the Best Gaffer.

## TUART (Eucalyptus gomphocephala) by Barry Hicks

The tuart tree grows to a height of about 100 feet, with a bole of about 40 feet and a diameter of 7 to 8 feet. Its main habitat is the limestone country between Lake Pinjar and Busselton. In 1906, 6000 acres of first class forest was set aside as State Forest between the Capel and Sabina rivers.

The timber is a pale yellow colour and has a very dense interlocking grain. It is very similar to wandoo in its mechanical properties, although it is five pounds lighter per cubic foot. (Tuart weighs 67 lbs per cubic foot against 72 lbs for wandoo.)

The principal uses in the past were for railway undercarriages, wheelwright work and general coach building. Supplies of tuart and wandoo from crown lands were reserved for use in government railway work. Unrestricted grazing and annual fires resulted in an absence of regeneration in the 30 to 40 years prior to 1906. Many factors make it difficult to regenerate the tuart forest. It does not renew itself freely like jarrah and karri.

The smaller turned items on display at the recent Classic and Wooden Boat Festival are made from tuart and include sailmakers' tools such as fids, serving mallets and heaving mallets, together with deadeyes, hearts, bullseyes, fairleads and belaying pins. These were all turned by my eldest son Robin in our small workshop in Beckenham. They were turned and worked on an antique lathe, drill press and band saw, which are still capable of a good day's work. These items will be handed down to future generation of our family as examples of a dying trade.

The two hundred dead eyes and hearts for the ENDEAVOUR Project were all made on the same antique machines which we have collected over the years and restored.

All the seven hundred wooden pulley blocks for the ENDEAVOUR were also made on the same machines.



This tuart treenail, one of thousands used as fastenings on the ENDEAVOUR REPLICA, has the distinction of holding the world distance record for Australian Eucalypts. It has been around the world 141 times on board the Space Shuttle ENDEAVOUR, and will soon be fitted in the Great Cabin. ••

# SAMA BIASA: A DOUBLE-ENDED PERAH LAMBO

BY NICK BURNINGHAM

One of the vessels exhibited at the Maritime Museum annex in B-Shed on Victoria Quay, is SAMA BIASA, a small double-ended sloop from the Island of Rote in Eastern Indonesia. There are a great variety of sailing craft, known by the general term *perahu* (*prahu* or *prau*), throughout the huge archipelago of Indonesia. The largest and most spectacular type, the *perahu pinis* (sometimes called *Macassar Schooners* because of their ketch rig) which crowd the harbours of Java, are now virtually all motorised. Other types continue to operate under sail alone; probably the most numerous of these are the *perahu lambo*. *Lambo* are relatively prosaic looking craft; most carry a gunter sloop rig and their hull form shows influence from western craft such as pearling luggers. Like pearling luggers, many *lambo* have an elliptical counter stern, but a few have transom sterns and others are double-ended.

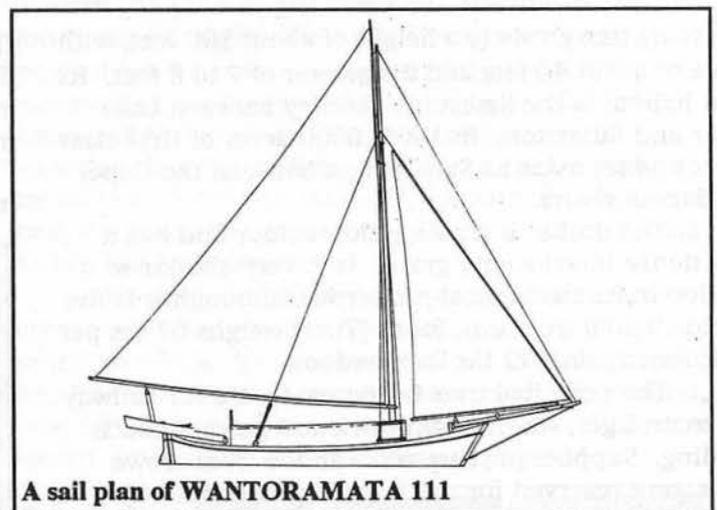
Double-ended *perahu lambo* are said to be the oldest and the original type of *lambo*. In the past they were quite numerous and the largest could load fifty tons or more (the largest *lambo* currently sailing load about 120 tons) but today the double-enders are all small vessels and they are built in only a few villages including Pepela on the north-east coast of Rote.

Buton, and the neighbouring islands to the south-east of Sulawesi, are the centre of *lambo* construction and operation. Indeed the *lambo* was classified as the "Butung (Buton) Lambo" by Adrian Horridge in his book on Indonesian sailing craft, "The Prahu". In the Buton region, the double ended *lambo* all hail from certain villages in the off-lying Tukang Besi Islands.

The finest of all double-ended *lambo*, and probably the most weatherly of all *perahu*, come from the village of Barunga on the island of Kaledupa. The boat builders' houses at Barunga are built on piles over the sea. They are accessible by stone causeways and old masts are laid between the causeways as precarious bridges; or they are more easily reached by canoe in the canals between the causeways. The *lambo*, and smaller craft, are built over the water on beams laid between the stone causeways. The appearance of the village and the mode of boatbuilding are typical of the Bajo people, who are sometimes known as the Sea Gypsies. But the people of Barunga do not speak the Bajo language (Bahasa Sama) nor do they acknowledge being Bajos. In fact the island of Kaledupa once had a large Bajo population: Bajos and other people from the Sulu Sea region, came into Eastern Indonesia during the first half of the 19th century as pirates and slave raiders. They made their bases on small remote islands such as Kaledupa and neighbouring Wangi Wangi where the large cannon used as bollards and kerb stones at the harbour attest to their piratical past. When piracy was suppressed during the second half of the 19th century, they turned to more peaceable maritime occupations - fishing, trade, and smuggling to Singapore.

After Indonesia had won its war of independence in 1949, the region of South Sulawesi and the off-lying islands was plunged into turmoil. An Islamic rebellion known as the Kahar Muzakkar rebellion started in 1951 and the embattled central government in Jakarta could not completely regain control until 1965. During these years, the off-lying islands were in a state of anarchy: piracy and banditry thrived while legitimate trade became virtually impossible. Many people abandoned their homes and moved to other regions, some of the smaller islands were totally de-populated. Many of the Bajos who stayed had sided with the rebels. When the rebellion was finally suppressed, the Bajos who had aided the pirate-rebels, or had perpetrated the piracy themselves, were driven away from Kaledupa. Those who were not obliged to leave the island intergrated with the local population, adopting the local dialect of Butonese and disavowing their ancestry; but a strong Bajo influence remains.

The double-ended *lambo* from Kaledupa are called *lambo-soppe*, for they exhibit the hull form of the swift traditional Bajo sailing craft, the *soppe*. The lines of a Kaledupa double-ender WANTORAMATA 111 show considerable deadrise, a very slack turn to the



A sail plan of WANTORAMATA 111

bilge, sharp hollow ends and very flared topsides. She was built for Australians, Daniel and Bernie Dwyer, but her lines are typical and some examples have considerably more deadrise.

SEJARAH ISLAM, a smaller *lambo-soppe* from the island of Tomea, has similar lines. Only 6.4m long, she was used mainly for fishing voyages and local freight but she made at least one voyage to Singapore, probably smuggling birds, before she was purchased by the author and Daniel Dwyer in 1979. We sailed her from Sulawesi to Darwin in Northern Australia. In Darwin, the SEJARAH ISLAM was overhauled and renovated by Mr. Michel Giraud and Ms. Beverly James (both now residents of Perth), who later sailed her to Gove in the Gulf of Carpentaria, back to Sulawesi in Indonesia and then back to Darwin again. At Gove, SEJARAH ISLAM demonstrated her speed by beating a

(continued page 7)

number of larger sailing boats in a race for cruising yachts. Since her return to Australia she has had a number of owners and suffered periods of neglect, at other times she has been carefully repaired and maintained. She must be about twenty-five years old by now.

SEJARAH ISLAM'S original sail plan gave her a generous sail area, set on a mast that both raked and curved aft. I reduced the hoist of her mainsail by a metre for the voyage to Australia and her sail plan has twice been reduced since then to make her easier to handle.

SAMA BIASA is from Rote, to the south of Timor; an area where the Bajo sea gypsy presence predates the piratical episode of the 19th Century. Today there are a few small Bajo communities in the region, but the influence of Bajo lifestyle and Bajo boat building style is less clear than it is in the Tukang Besi Islands. The population of Pepela, where SAMA BIASA was built, acknowledge a mixture of Rotenese and Salawesi ancestry but few would admit to Bajo ancestry. The double ended *lambo* such as SAMA BIASA have a design that is based on that of smaller open boats, locally known as *ofa*. There were a few *soppe* built on Rote and the design of the *ofa* is obviously related to the *soppe*, but it is more distantly related than the design of the *lambo-soppe* from the Tukang Besi Islands. SAMA BIASA has the same type of cabin structure as the *lambo-soppe* - it has inboard sloping sides and a flat top - but her lines are relatively crude and poorly faired. The midsection is much fuller but the midbody is short so there is little gain in capacity.

A fourth example of the double-ended *lambo* is SAMA SAJA from the island of Selaru, the most southerly of the Tanimbar Islands in the South Moluccas. In this area there is no evidence of Bajo or South Sulawesi admixture in the population. SAMA SAJA is unusually beamy by local standards, or any other standards, but apart from this she can be regarded as representative of a class of small scruffy *lambo* from the remote islands of the South Moluccas. These vessels are used for carrying small amounts of market produce, occasional sacks of cement and passengers who are frequently relatives of the owner. They play a similar role to the family station wagon in rural Australia.

Her sail plan is certainly scaled to the beam rather than the length of the hull and looks extraordinarily large. In fact, SAMA SAJA could sail quite safely without any ballast. In flat water she could sail to windward adequately and, unlike a *lambo-soppe*, she would come about very quickly. ••

Sail plan of SAMA SAJA



## THE CLASSIC AND WOODEN BOAT FESTIVAL - 1992

Over the weekend of 24/25 October 1992, Challenger Harbour in Fremantle was once again the focus for a grand celebration of all things wooden, classic and maritime.

Boats ranged in size from the STS Leeuwin at 55 metres overall to one of Alan Skinner's delightful models - a 28cm whaleboat. In between those two there was plenty to catch the eye and stir the soul.

Eighty boats were on show in the water, another 16 on the hard stand and 12 exhibitors displayed their wares in the marquee.

The STS Leeuwin and MV Vigilant, moored at the refuelling jetty in the Fishing Boat Harbour, were as popular as ever. The Marine and Harbour's flare and safety demonstrations drew crowds of interested people, as did the Leeuwin Sports held on and around the ship.

The MHA stand was the biggest and best yet and congratulations to all those who volunteered their services over the weekend. This year's festival also saw the first example of MHA merchandise - the Beilby Bag. Thanks to Margo and Mike Beilby, Barbara and Ross Shardlow. These cotton shopping bags, sporting a sepia re-production of a Ross Shardlow original, are nearly all sold, but a new print run is planned for 1993.

Other MHA members prominent in the marquee were Nick Burningham with his splendid maritime art and Barry and Robin Hicks with some wonderful examples of their fine woodworking skills. The large wooden ship's wheel at the centre of their display was very popular with all ages.

The Model Steamships Association, another MHA member, mounted their eye catching display down the centre of the marquee. By the end of the weekend they had also caught the eyes of the judges and won the award for the most interesting exhibit.



Garry Kealy and Glen Hope in KLINKER ENDEAVOUR

The Build a Boat in a Day competition sponsored by Bunnings and Sika Australia, drew an enthusiastic audience, proving once again that we love to watch other people at work. In the open division David Morse and Chris Lee came home in front of Garry Kealy and Glen Hope from the Endeavour Project with Carol Jackson and Paddy Hogarth from Leeuwin third. Garry and Glen's clinker built entry was quite a talking point

(continued page 8)

amongst the armchair sailors gathered on the jetty.

The sea breeze was rattling the halyards by the time the school's division hit the waster for their race. The strong winds gave the contestants a wild ride and the armchair sailors even more to cheer about. Tom Clarkson and Greg O'Byrne from the 1 st Fremantle Sea Scouts ran out easy winners from the two All Saints teams and the crew from South Fremantle Senior High School.

The only note of protest which came out of the weekend concerned the report of a Union Jack flag being flown upside down. This sighting sparked a vigourous debate in the official caravan which ranged from the Republican influence of our Prime Minister to the state of health of the House of Windsor.

Overall the weekend raised \$7,224 which was donated to the Leeuwin Captain's Fund for the sponsorship of voyage places for financially disadvantaged youth. ●●

Exhibitor prizes in the form of brass plaques were awarded to the following:

- Most Attractive Launch - No. 18, ALTAMI, G Purcell
- Most Attractive Sail Boat - No. 70, BRUNETTE, B Stone
- Best Old Gaffer - No. 44, ORIEL, M Igglesden
- Most Attractive Open Boat - No. 104, MISTER CURLY, S Baine
- Most Interesting Exhibit - Model Steamships Association

**\* NEWS \* NEWS \* NEWS \* NEWS \* NEWS**

The Christmas sausage and sardine sizzle held on December 14th outside the MHA workshop was enjoyed by about 40 members. It's success was assured by the delicious spicy sardines generously donated by Jim Mendolia of Mendolia Seafoods.

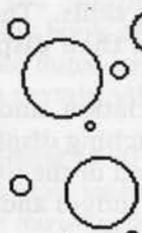
Thanks to those who organized the event and manned the tongs, and to all who shared the pleasant summer evening on the wharf.

#### MEETINGS FOR 1993

Committee meetings are held at 5.00pm on the second Monday of every month in the Leeuwin STAWA conference room, B Shed, Victoria Quay. The first meeting for 1993 will be on Monday February 8th.

The AGM will be held on April 12 th. Time place and details of the agenda will be announced in the next Newsletter.

 *Happy New Year*

 *Happy New Year*

*Thankyou for your support in 1992*

*We wish you all a happy and prosperous 1993*



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